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WEDNESDAY
AUGUST 19, 1953

Quiet at the office. Bought some Modern Library books at Smith's and Galignani's and theatrical memoirs of Ada Menken, Gladys Cooper, and Cécile Sorel.

With no mail outside of official channels flowing into the office, with the normal telephone and telegraph operations suspended, work in the office is unrewarding. I have been ploughing through masses of reports on the Coal and Steel Community. For recreation, while journeying back and forth to Versailles, I read the Federalist papers.

Actually, during my occasional sorties into the streets I gather more information than at my desk. Yesterday I had a talk with John Hughes in front of the Talleyrand and a long conversation on Avenue Gabriel with Don Cook of the Herald Tribune. The apathy of the French in the face of the inconveniences to which they are daily subjected is quite remarkable and, in a sense, disappointing. Confronted with a number of problems of grave importance to their national security, the average citizen's reaction to what is almost a complete breakdown of governmental functions seems to be one of cynical contempt for France's political institutions, unaccompanied by any resolve to exercise his personal influence to ameliorate the situation.

Ambassador Joxe, the French envoy to Moscow, took lunch with me. Joxe is an agreeable and intelligent man. He believes the Soviets will continue their efforts to divide France from its Western partners by appealing to it to effect the military neutralization of Germany. He thinks the Russians must improve the standard of living in their own country by producing more consumer goods in their factories, and that a postponement of efforts in that sense would endanger the Politburo régime. Consequently, they will not resort to war but will by diplomacy endeavour to keep the Western powers off balance.

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He believes the Russians are seriously afraid of a revival of German militarism and the best argument for the European Army with them is that it would bring the German military under a supranational control and [redacted] make it logistically impossible for German units, operating on their own, to engage in an attempt to recapture by force the lost provinces. However, he admits, such arguments at this time are futile since the cardinal Soviet policy toward the West is to destroy the schemes for European integration and, if possible, later to wreck NATO. Nevertheless, if the EDC should be ratified by the Six Parliaments he thinks the Russians will accept it as a fact and try to deal with the subsequent situation by other means than force.

If the Russians are to elevate the living standards of their masses, they need peace both in the West and East. China's material needs are too much for them to handle and they wish trade to reopen to some extent with China on a multilateral basis.

A [redacted] few letters are now being delivered by volunteers. I had one today from Dean Acheson, mailed in Washington on August 1st, asking for a subscription to The Harry S. Truman Library. I sent him a cheque for $1,000 for this purpose.

This afternoon I visited at long last the stained glass exhibition at the Louvre. Never before has such a collection been assembled. The pieces were put in safety during the war and will soon be sent back for incorporation into their respective religious edifices.

Audrey and I also spent an hour in the 18th Century decorative arts galleries in the Louvre. The quality ~~and quantity, especially of French~~ porcelains and faience, gathered by individual donors are staggering and give one the impression that even with unlimited money ~~collections on this scale~~ will no longer be possible for lack of similar stocks for sale. ~~The tendency~~

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for objects of art to gravitate to museums, both in the United States and elsewhere, has sensibly diminished the floating supply of articles of high quality, and I would apprehend that this tendency, if for no other than tax reasons, will continue unabated, constantly depleting the supplies in dealers' hands available for private purchase.

Tonight, E. Audrey and I went to the illuminated fête given thrice a week at the Chateau of Versailles for the benefit of the restoration fund. It was a wonderful show; in spite of the difficulties of transportation, thousands of spectators were there. As at Chenonceaux, history was retailed over loud-speakers from recordings by famous artists while sections of the Chateau were brought into temporary relief by electric beams to illustrate particular points. After its long neglect, following Louis XVI's withdrawal to Paris, Louis Philippe probably saved it from eventual ruin by making it a museum dedicated to "The History of All the Glories of France". The lighted fountains, woodlands and lawns were beautiful even beyond expectation.

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